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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
October 7, 1952

Memorandum on Stalin's Article in Bolshevik
from Soviet Division

1. The article is written in the form of "notes" dated February 1952 on the draft of a new political economic textbook discussed at a previous unpublicized November 1951 meeting of scholars. In addition there are answers by Stalin to subsequent comments and questions made by the scholars on the basis of the "notes".

2. Stalin is not revising Communist theory, even though he discards two earlier "economic laws", one Lenin's, the other his own. He appears to be redefining and adding to certain earlier, basic Marxist concepts which were postulated by Marx and Engels as applicable under capitalism and by Lenin both under capitalism and the early days of the socialist state. Stalin is bringing these concepts up to date in order to give them validity in present phase of transition from socialism to communism.

3. While the bulk of the article considers problems concerning the transition from socialism to capitalism, Stalin does make some observations on the capitalist world which furnish clues as to future Soviet policy.

- (a) War is inevitable so long as imperialism continues to exist, but war between capitalist states is more likely than between the capitalist world and the communist orbit. This is so because of the division of world markets today between communism and capitalism. Just as the war in 1939 began between capitalist states over shrinking markets so when Germany and Japan have been rebuilt by the West a similar falling out in the capitalist world is likely. The capitalist world is less likely to attack the USSR because where capitalist wars pose only the question of the supremacy of some capitalist countries, war between capitalism and communism poses the question of the continued existence of capitalism itself. In this connection, Stalin does not attempt to explain Hitler's eastward march.

- (b) In advancing this line Stalin seems to be assuaging internal fears that war is imminent between the USSR and the capitalist world. Thus, according to Marxist theory, if the United States were now the only super capitalist power left, then communists throughout the world would have to consider that a capitalist attack was indeed the next logical event in history. However, by maintaining that the US has not reached this position and by pointing to the weakening of the capitalist world after each world war, Stalin suggests that after another capitalist war the socialist world may find that an armageddon will not be necessary.
- (c) Although the question of peace at present is theoretically a temporary one, Stalin's present writing appears to envisage a more or less lengthy period of coexistence. This would seem to be a slight change from the Zhdanov/anti-Varga line which held the collapse of the capitalist world to be imminent.
- (d) However, the ability to maintain even a temporary peace appears to rest on dissolving the aggressive western alliance and isolating the United States as the principal aggressor. To combat this alliance Stalin endeavors to make the peace movement a more appealing medium for use by non-communists. He carefully distinguishes between WPC goals and USSR desires. Accordingly, the WPC is only interested in replacing existing belligerent governments with others more ready to preserve a temporary peace, and does not try to achieve socialism in any particular country. (In line with this it is significant that the Marty-Tillon group did not permit proper emphasis on the Moscow line that all ills stem from US imperialism. Furthermore Kennan's recall while stemming primarily from a desire to exclude him personally was also probably intended to give additional warning to Europe of the Kremlin's attitude towards the US as the primary organizer of aggression.)

4. The bulk of the memorandum written in his own style and worked out in intricate dialectics is on the problem of transition from socialism to communism.

- (a) Stalin lays down three basic preliminary conditions for transition.
 - (1) Steady growth of the economy of the Soviet bloc, primarily of heavy industry;
 - (2) Gradual transformation of collective farms to state farms, in order to eliminate a money economy;
 - (3) Extension of educational opportunities.
- (b) At the present time there are some differences between the urban and rural class, intellectual and physical labor. In the future essential differences can be erased but non-essential ones will never disappear.
- (c) With the extension of socialism in the majority of the countries of the world the state in the USSR will wither away and leave society, organized as a central economic organ, heir to nationalized property.
- (d) In contrast to his previous ideological position, Stalin now seems to feel that the state can wither away before the achievement of communism, if socialism can be effected in the majority of the countries of the world. The achievement of communism, however, is relegated to the indefinite future.